

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully reviewed the Office Action dated March 8, 2006, and respectfully request reconsideration in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claim 1 has been amended to require polyurethane (A) to be formed by reacting the "isocyanate groups" of the polyisocyanates with the "isocyanate-reactive groups" of the isocyanate-reactive component. Support for this amendment is implicitly found in Claim 1 because it is well known that the urethane groups of the polyurethane are formed by reacting the isocyanate groups of the polyisocyanate with the isocyanate-reactive groups of the isocyanate-reactive component.

Claims 1, 3-5 and 12 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by WO 2001/77200 to Kagerer et al, which is believed to correspond to U.S. Patent Application 2003/0124357. The Examiner contends that compounds containing thiol groups are not excluded by the subject claims because the additional step of adding a thiol reactant to an intermediate polyurethane, formed by reacting the polyisocyanates with polyols not containing any thiol groups, is not excluded by the present claims.

Applicants traverse this rejection in view of the amendments to Claim 1 and submit that even if the isocyanate-reactive compounds are added sequentially as contended by the Examiner, thiol reactants are still excluded from the claims. As amended, Claim 1 requires the isocyanate groups of polyisocyanates (A1) to react with an isocyanate-reactive component that consists of components (A2) to (A5), which excludes compounds containing thiol groups. Therefore, even if polyurethanes (A) are prepared by adding the isocyanate-reactive components sequentially as suggested by the Examiner, the subsequently added isocyanate-reactive components are still reacting with the isocyanate groups of polyisocyanates (A1) and, thus, the isocyanate-reactive components must still consist of components (A2) to (A5).

The intermediate polyurethane referred to by the Examiner must contain isocyanate groups if it is reactive with isocyanate-reactive groups, such as thiol groups. The only isocyanate groups present in the intermediate polyurethane are the

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isocyanate groups present in polyisocyanates (A1). Whenever these groups are reacted, whether in the first stage or in a subsequent stage, the amended claims require these isocyanate groups to react with the isocyanate-reactive groups present in an isocyanate-reactive component that consists of components (A2) to (A5).

Just because the isocyanate groups are reacted in a subsequent step does not mean that the scope of the isocyanate-reactive component is broadened to include thiol reactants. The process of adding the isocyanate-reactive component in two or more steps is disclosed in the specification at page 14, lines 12-20, which discloses preparing a polyurethane prepolymer containing isocyanate groups and subsequently reacting the isocyanate groups with other isocyanate-reactive compounds. Whether the isocyanate-reactive compounds are reacted in one stage or in several stages, the isocyanate-reactive component must consist of components (A2) to (A5), and these components exclude the thiol reactants required by Kagerer et al.

For the preceding reasons it is submitted that Kagerer et al fails to anticipate the subject claims, as amended. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

The foregoing is believed to be a complete response to the Office Action dated March 8, 2006, and in view of the preceding amendments and remarks, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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